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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Comptroller

DATE: 1 September 1953

FROM : Chief, Program Analysis Staff

SUBJECT: Industrial College of the Armed Forces Lecture on Public
Administration 27 August 1953

1. This is one of a series of lectures in the course of Industrial Mobilization. Because of this, the subject matter of the lecture was directed at public administration during a period of partial or total mobilization. However, in order to reach that point the greater part of the lecture was devoted to a discussion of the organization of the Federal Government during peace time.

2. Public administration, for the purposes of this session, was defined as the unity achieved in directing the various elements of a large organization and getting people with divergent ideas to work in harmony. Great stress was placed upon this element in view of its importance in the present structure of the U. S. Government.

3. Considering the President as the Chief Executive, the various forces determining his course of action were discussed in detail with emphasis being placed on the disruptive forces encountered which require compromise in order to achieve desired objectives. They are:

a. Congress, which has taken an increasing part through legislation, in the make up of executive departments, and assigning functions and duties to units therein.

b. Congressional committee chairmen or other committee members who have imposed their will, by legislation or by budgetary approval, on departments or agencies of the Government, and Congressional committee staffs which have undercut directives of the executive or executive agency heads by going to subordinate employees of the organization and forcing them to testify contrary to the established policies of the agency heads.

c. The independent bureaus and establishments such as the NSRB, NSC, WPB, NLRB and many others which have, in many instances, usurped the power of executive departments.

d. Encouragement of bureau heads to deal directly with Congress on matters pertaining to the bureau and in some cases on appropriating funds directly to the bureau

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without going through the executive department head to which the bureau is attached. Furthermore, in many cases Congress has given bureau heads power far in excess of their nominal supervisors, the department head.

e. Cabinet members attempting to use their position to work at cross-purposes with the President in order to further their political ambitions.

f. The lack of a civilian career service which has hindered the establishment of a esprit-de-corps and has brought about an unending individual struggle for position and grade. The fact that a civilian employee's grade is dependent on the position held has resulted in constant dickering with agencies in order to secure a better position and has prevented the orderly establishment of a stable group which would insure the continuity of the organization and its operating policies.

g. Every decision must weigh the political situation and in many instances it is paramount in arriving at the establishment of a policy.

4. The remedies suggested were general in nature. In brief, it was recommended that:

a. More administrative power be centered in the President and that he be permitted to delegate the authority and responsibility for carrying out such authority.

b. Congressional interference with bureaus and subordinate agencies of executive departments be eliminated by requiring Congress to send directives to the President for filtering down through the department to the specific bureau head or executive of the division concerned.

c. A civilian career service based more on the State Department career service than the military career service be established and that civilian grades pertain to the individual rather than be dependent on the position to which the individual is assigned.

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